

2555505

Registered provider: Aspiration House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated and provides care for up to six children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and/or atypical autism, learning disabilities, global development disorder and associated difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2022.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 2 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/05/2023	Full	Good
17/05/2022	Full	Good
03/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff provide children with a good standard of care. Staff work hard to form relationships with children who value their support. Children feel able to approach staff and ask for their help. Staff are nurturing and patient in their approach and ensure that children understand what is being asked of them.

Staff have extensive knowledge of children's individual communication needs and always have various tools to support effective communication. Staff have started to learn Makaton with the aim of using this in addition to other forms of communication. Therefore, children have several ways to communicate their needs which will promote their voice being heard.

Children are supported by staff who are aspirational for them. Staff are constantly seeking ways to assist children to develop their independence. Detailed social stories are one method used to explain to a child, what actions are needed to complete a task. This step-by-step approach has over time, enabled children to develop key skills that will continue to support them in the years to come.

Children access a wide variety of activities. Should staff identify barriers that would hamper a child's ability to experience an activity, they work hard to reduce these so children remain included in society. These varied opportunities help children to improve their confidence and support them to develop their social skills.

Children's health needs are met. All children are registered with the appropriate health care services. The children eat a balanced diet and can choose which foods they want to eat. Staff continually encourage children to try new foods and for one child this has meant that he has gone from a self-restricted diet to now enjoying a wide range of foods. Staff have been proactive in raising a concern about a child's health needs. They are working with health professionals to capture information about a child's current presenting health needs, to determine if a child has specific medical condition.

Staff prioritise children's education and the children go to school daily. Staff and education colleagues work collaboratively, and they both agree on targets for the children. When targets have been achieved, necessary certificates are applied for. This reinforces to the children that they have worked hard to achieve their successes and their efforts have been recognised.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff continually build on their knowledge of the children and the most appropriate way to support them and keep them safe. All the children have detailed risk assessments and behaviour support plans. These documents provide staff with the necessary guidance on how to meet the children's needs on a day-to-day basis and ensure they remain safe.

Children's needs are such that they require close supervision. Therefore, they do not go missing or become involved in any form of exploitation. Children are safe when they are online as staff regularly monitor the content that the children are viewing. Staff also work in partnership with families to ensure that devices are safe for the children to use.

The children have incidents in the home. When these occur, staff are responsive and ensure that children are safe. Staff and children receive a debrief and extra time is taken with the children to provide their debrief and learning as a social story. This allows children to explore their behaviour and help them understand its impact.

The children live in a large house that is divided into specific living areas. Usual practice is for window restrictors to be fitted to all windows to reduce the risk to children who may try and use a window to leave the property. A first-floor window was found with broken restrictors and gone unnoticed by staff. This posed a significant hazard to the children. Action was taken straight away to remedy this.

There is a clear medication process in place. Staff receive detailed training and are observed administering medication before they can take the lead in this process. There have been a high number of medication errors since the last inspection. When these have been identified, there has been action taken by the leadership team to improve staff competence. However, errors continue to occur, and these have the potential to cause harm to children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager, supported by the leadership team, is passionate about improving the lives of the children. They lead a motivated and knowledgeable team who have a good understanding of the children's histories and presenting needs.

The manager is keen to continually promote staff development. Staff begin their training as part of a thorough induction programme. They then continue to enhance their skills and knowledge with additional and child specific training when required. Children therefore receive individualised care and support to meet their complex needs.

The leadership team provides staff with regular supervision. This process allows for staff's competence and knowledge of children to be reviewed. In addition, staff are provided with guidance and support that contributes to their professional development. Reflective practice is not yet embedded within supervision; however, staff can reflect on their practice in monthly team meetings.

Staff work in partnership with external agencies to ensure that the children receive the support they need. Professionals are of the view that the children are making progress and communication from the staff at the home is described as good.

The manager recognises the importance of children maintaining links with people who matter to them. There is a coordinated approach with family to ensure that family time is

positive for all. There have been occasions when the manager has had to be creative to facilitate family time and great efforts have been made to ensure it goes ahead.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure - (d) that the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that the home is maintained to an acceptable level of cleanliness. It also relates to the registered person actioning any outstanding repairs to the home and ensuring that the living accommodation and garden area is safe for the children. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(d))	05 Aug 24
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that all staff are competent in administering medication to avoid errors being made and children receive the right medication. (Regulation 23(1)(2)(b))	05 Aug 24

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the Children's Guide should help children to understand what happens in the home, the care they can expect to receive while living there, how to make a complaint and how they can access advocacy or support. The children's guide must be age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to ensure they understand it ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)
- The registered person should ensure that they notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if there is a serious incident relating to protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2555505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspiration House Limited

Registered provider address: Aspiration House Limited, 2nd Floor, Portland Street, Manchester, M1 3BE

Responsible individual: Lyndsey Sim

Registered manager: Julie-Ann White

Inspector

Lizette Watts, social care inspector

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